COMICO

MIKE W. BARR • ADAM HUGHES • RICK MAGYAR

the MAZE AGENCY®

4

U.S.A. $1.95

CAN. $2.50

FISH POLICE™ #16

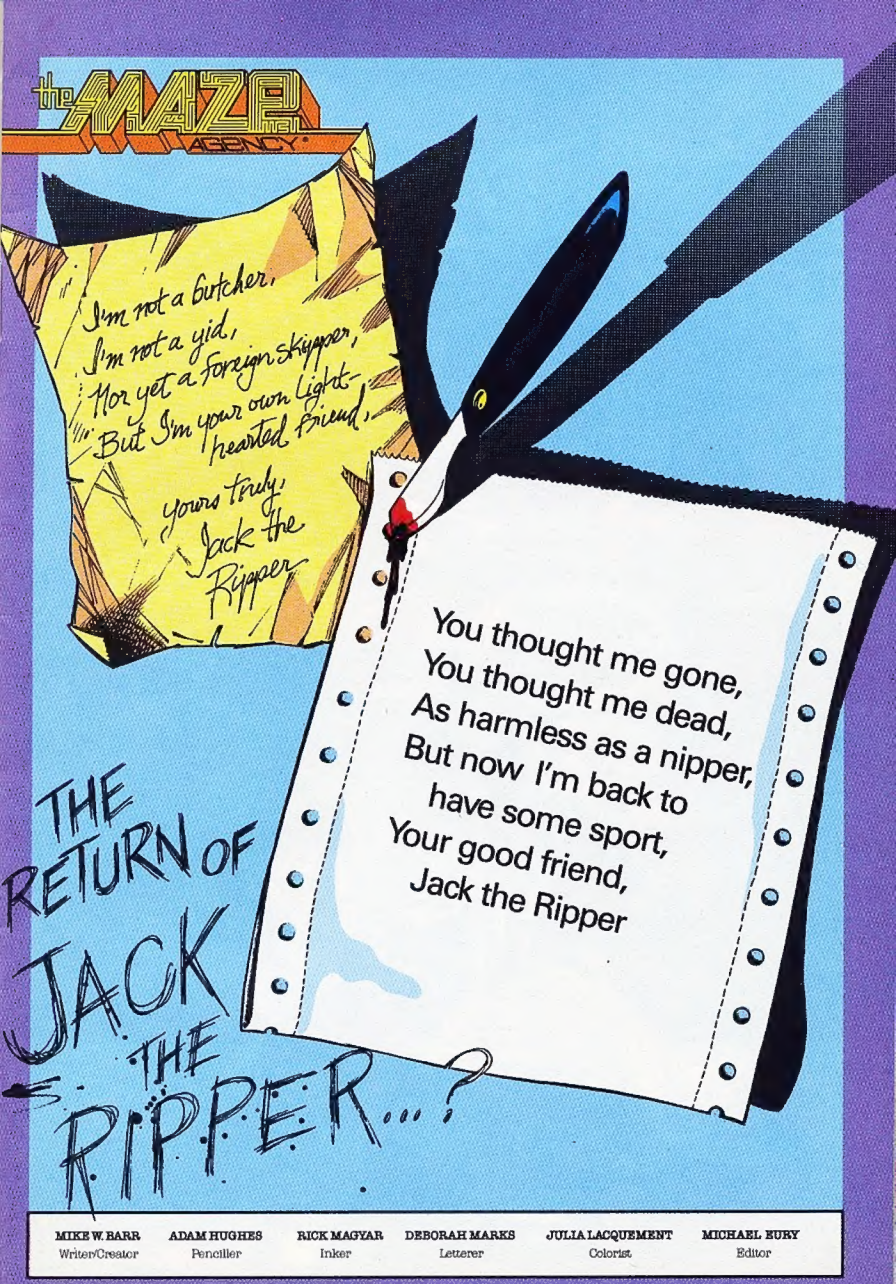
Oscar discovers the Fishworld Bible...

...and the *secrets* within!

Also includes *Fish Shticks* back-up by Matt Howarth!

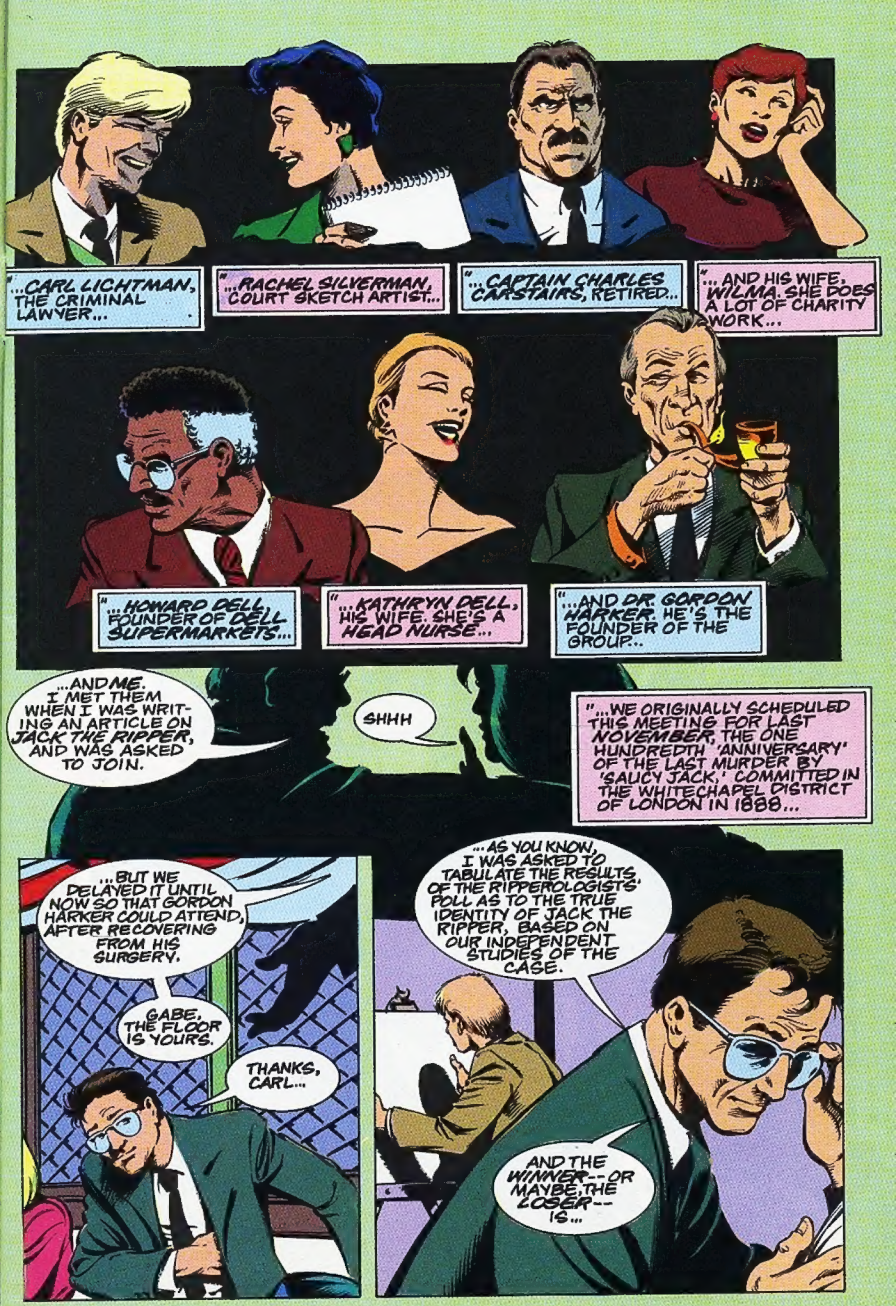
ON SALE IN APRIL FROM COMICO!

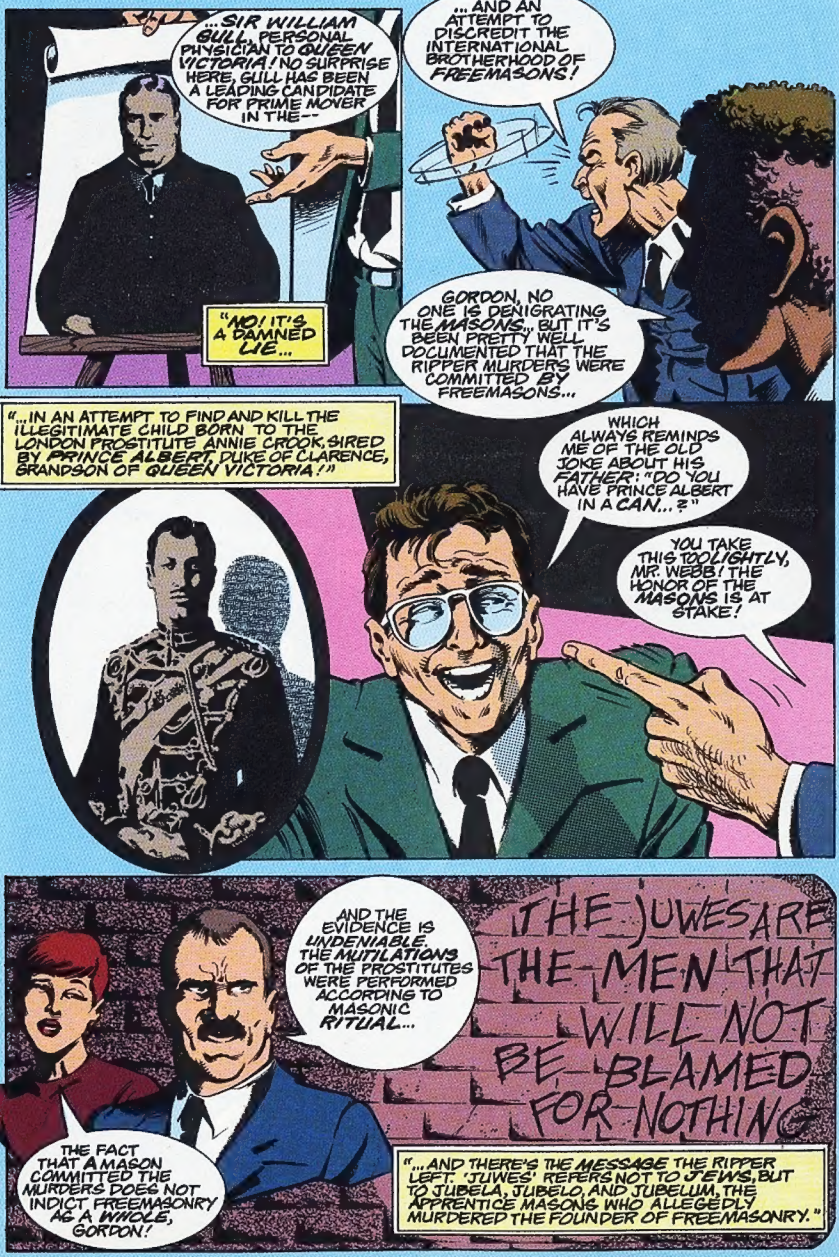
The MAZE Agency #4, March 1989. Published by Comico The Comic Company, 1547 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA 19401. The MAZE Agency text and illustrations are ©1989 Michael W. Barr. All other material, unless otherwise specified, is ©1989 Comico The Comic Company. The MAZE Agency, Jennifer Mays, Gabriel Webb, and all other prominent characters contained herein are registered trademarks of Michael W. Barr. All rights reserved. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this publication and those of any existing or pre-existing person or institution is intended and any similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. The MAZE Agency is published monthly. Printed in Canada.



MIKE W. BARR	ADAM HUGHES	RICK MAGYAR	DEBORAH MARKS	JULIA LACQUEMENT	MICHAEL EURY
Writer/Creator	Penciller	Inker	Letterer	Colorist	Editor

"NOW THAT WE'VE GORGED OURSELVES ON ANOTHER OF ANGELO'S EXCELLENT MEALS...
ANGELO
CLOSED FOR PRIVATE PARTY
...I'M SURE WE'D LIKE TO WELCOME BACK OUR FOUNDING MEMBER...
...DR. GORDON HARKER. WE DELAYED THIS MEETING FROM NOVEMBER JUST SO YOU COULD BE HERE, GORDON!
THANK YOU, MY FRIENDS... I AM HONORED.
"AND A SPECIAL GREETING FOR THE GUEST OF GABE WEBB, PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR MISS JENNIFER MAYS, OF THE MAZE AGENCY."
THANK YOU, MR. LICHTMAN, IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE.
I'M STILL NOT SURE WHO THESE OTHER "RIPPEROLOGISTS" ARE, GABE.
THEN LET ME FILL YOU IN, JEN...


...CARL LICHTMAN, THE CRIMINAL LAWYER...
"...RACHEL SILVERMAN, COURT SKETCH ARTIST...
"...CAPTAIN CHARLES CARSTAIRS, RETIRED...
"...AND HIS WIFE, WILMA. SHE DOES A LOT OF CHARITY WORK...
"...HOWARD DELL, FOUNDER OF DELL SUPERMARKETS...
"...KATHRYN DELL, HIS WIFE. SHE'S A HEAD NURSE...
"...AND DR. GORDON HARKER, HE'S THE FOUNDER OF THE GROUP...
...AND ME. I MET THEM WHEN I WAS WRITING AN ARTICLE ON JACK THE RIPPER, AND WAS ASKED TO JOIN.
SHHH
"...WE ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED THIS MEETING FOR LAST NOVEMBER, THE ONE HUNDREDTH 'ANNIVERSARY' OF THE LAST MURDER BY 'SAUCY JACK,' COMMITTED IN THE WHITECHAPEL DISTRICT OF LONDON IN 1888...
...BUT WE DELAYED IT UNTIL NOW SO THAT GORDON HARKER COULD ATTEND, AFTER RECOVERING FROM HIS SURGERY.
GABE, THE FLOOR IS YOURS.
THANKS, CARL...
...AS YOU KNOW, I WAS ASKED TO TABULATE THE RESULTS OF THE RIPPEROLOGISTS' POLL AS TO THE TRUE IDENTITY OF JACK THE RIPPER, BASED ON OUR INDEPENDENT STUDIES OF THE CASE.
AND THE WINNER--OR MAYBE, THE LOSER--IS...


...SIR WILLIAM GULL, PERSONAL PHYSICIAN TO QUEEN VICTORIA! NO SURPRISE HERE, GULL HAS BEEN A LEADING CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MOVER IN THE--
"NO! IT'S A DAMNED LIE...
...AND AN ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF FREEMASONS!
GORDON, NO ONE IS DENIGRATING THE MASONS... BUT IT'S BEEN PRETTY WELL DOCUMENTED THAT THE RIPPER MURDERS WERE COMMITTED BY FREEMASONS...
"...IN AN ATTEMPT TO FIND AND KILL THE ILLEGITIMATE CHILD BORN TO THE LONDON PROSTITUTE ANNIE CROOK, SIRED BY PRINCE ALBERT, DUKE OF CLARENCE, GRANDSON OF QUEEN VICTORIA!"
WHICH ALWAYS REMINDS ME OF THE OLD JOKE ABOUT HIS FATHER: "DO YOU HAVE PRINCE ALBERT IN A CAN...?"
YOU TAKE THIS TOO LIGHTLY, MR. WEBB! THE HONOR OF THE MASONS IS AT STAKE!
AND THE EVIDENCE IS UNDENIABLE. THE MUTILATIONS OF THE PROSTITUTES WERE PERFORMED ACCORDING TO MASONIC RITUAL...
THE JUWES ARE THE MEN THAT WILL NOT BE BLAMED FOR NOTHING
THE FACT THAT A MASON COMMITTED THE MURDERS DOES NOT INDICT FREEMASONRY AS A WHOLE, GORDON!
"...AND THERE'S THE MESSAGE THE RIPPER LEFT. 'JUWES' REFERS NOT TO JEWS, BUT TO JUBELA, JUBELO, AND JUBELUM, THE APPRENTICE MASONS WHO ALLEGEDLY MURDERED THE FOUNDER OF FREEMASONRY."

NONSENSE! I WILL NOT SIT HERE AND HEAR A GOOD AND BENEVOLENT ORGANIZATION MALIGNED!
GORDON, WAIT--!
SO NICE TO MEET YOU, MISS MAYS-- GABE HAS TOLD US ALL ABOUT YOU.
OH, HE HAS...?
HEY, THAT'S GOOD, RAE!
WOULD YOU LIKE IT? I'LL FINISH IT TOMORROW; COME BY IN THE AFTERNOON, AND IT'LL BE--
EEEEKK
SOMEONE CALL AN AMBULANCE! HURRY!
"YOU'RE VERY FORTUNATE, MR. DELL-- THE CUT FROM RIGHT TO LEFT JUST MISSED YOUR JUGULAR VEIN...
MANHATTAN GENERAL Emergency

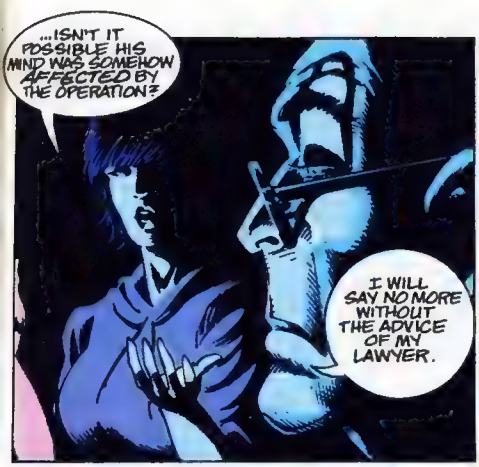
WE'LL BE KEEPING MR DELL OVERNIGHT; BUT THERE'S NO REASON WHY HE CAN'T BE RELEASED IN THE MORNING...
THANK YOU, DOCTOR.
HOWARD, YOU DIDN'T SEE WHO IT WAS?
NO, KATHY... GRABBED ME FROM BEHIND. THE POLICE SAID IT WAS PROBABLY SOME PUNKS THEY'D HAD TROUBLE WITH BEFORE... BUT I'M FINE...
"PUNKS"! WE MIGHT AS WELL BE LIVING IN WHITE-CHAPEL...!
AT LEAST HOWARD IS WELL, DEAR. YOU OUGHT TO CONSIDER MOVING. THE BUILDING WE OWN IS GOING CONDO, AND THERE ARE UNITS AVAILABLE...
WELL, YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO SHOW A GIRL A GOOD TIME, ACE.
I'M SORRY, JEN; THIS EVENING TURNED OUT A LOT DIFFERENTLY THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD. I THOUGHT YOU'D ENJOY MEETING FELLOW CRIMINOLOGISTS AND ALL.
AS I'VE SAID, I'M NOT SURE I AM A CRIMINOLOGIST, GABE. I DON'T MAKE A STUDY OF CRIME, LIKE YOU DO IN YOUR ARTICLES...
...WHEN WE'D BOTH RATHER BE TALKING ABOUT US.
MAYBE THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG; WE'VE BEEN TALKING SHOP ALL NIGHT...
GABE, I GOT A LETTER TODAY... FROM CAROL DROGAN...

ART'S WIFE? WHAT DOES SHE WANT?
IT'S -- APPARENTLY HER FIRST ANNIVERSARY SINCE ART DIED...
...SHE BLAMES ME FOR HIS DEATH, SAYS HE'D STILL BE ALIVE IF I HADN'T...
JESUS, THAT POOR KID. SHE MUST BE GOING THROUGH HELL.
HER? WHAT ABOUT ME?
THIS MUST BE THE PLACE...
HI, RAE. IT'S GABE.
COME ON UP, GABE, I'M JUST ABOUT DONE.
BZZLT
I'M SORRY, HONEY. I'LL TALK TO HER.
YOU'LL GET OVER HIM YET. WE ALL WILL.
PUFT
NO ELEVATOR.
PUFT
WONDERFUL.
PUFT

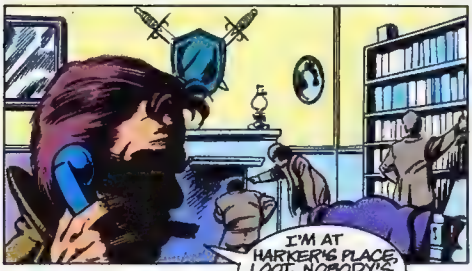
RACHEL? RAE, IT'S ME...
KNOK KNOK
RAE?!
NG
OH, JESUS...!
THE JUWES ARE THE MEN THAT WILL NOT BE BLAMED FOR NOTHING
"DR. POST SAYS HER THROAT WAS SLASHED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT... SHE DIDN'T LIVE LONG AFTER, MAYBE TEN SECONDS, TOPS...

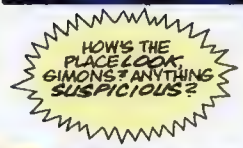
...SO THIS MUST HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY THE KILLER. YOU JUST MISSED HIM, WEBB.
YEAH... HE MUST HAVE HEARD ME BUZZ, HID ON THE STAIRS, THEN LEFT THE BUILDING WHEN I PASSED HIM.
THE JUWE
THE MEN T
WILL N
BE BLAME
FOR N
ARE YOU SURE IT WAS HER YOU TALKED TO?
IT WAS RACHEL, LT. BLISS. SHE MUST'VE BEEN TALKING TO THE KILLER WHEN I BUZZED HER.
AND HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO GET UP HERE?
A MINUTE... A MINUTE AND A HALF, MAYBE... I DON'T KNOW.
KILLER WOULDN'TA KNOWN EITHER, LOOT.
"I FIGURED THAT OUT, SIMONS. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN WORKING WHEN THE KILLER CAME TO THE DOOR. SHE LET HIM IN, THEN BROUGHT HIM BACK TO HER STUDIO...
...WHICH IS WHERE SHE WAS ATTACKED.
GABE, I CAME AS SOON AS I--
OH, MY...!
JEN, IT'S RACHEL...

...SHE'S--- SHE'S DEAD.
I KNOW, HONEY. I KNOW. LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO.
LIEUTENANT, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO THIS?
KLEIN HANZ
"UNTIL WE DETERMINE IF IT'S EVIDENCE, IT'S STAYING RIGHT THERE, WEBB...
"...BUT YOU'RE COMING WITH ME."
Dr. Thomas SPENGLER
OFFICE HOURS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
"YOU REALIZE, LIEUTENANT BLISS, I KEEP ALL RECORDS IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE..."
OF COURSE, DR. SPENGLER-- BUT A WOMAN'S BEEN MURDERED, AND ONE OF YOUR PATIENTS, DR. GORDON HARKER, IS IMPLICATED.
YES, GORDON IS ONE OF MY SUCCESSES...
?
...I WAS ABLE TO REMOVE A TUMOR FROM HIS BRAIN THE SIZE OF A SMALL MELON. IT WAS BENIGN, FORTUNATELY.
BUT THE BRAIN IS ALWAYS A VERY TRICKY AREA, DOCTOR...

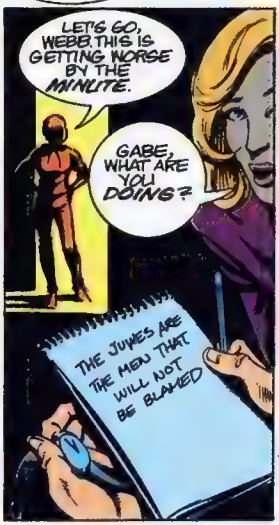

...ISN'T IT POSSIBLE HIS MIND WAS SOMEHOW AFFECTED BY THE OPERATION?
I WILL SAY NO MORE WITHOUT THE ADVICE OF MY LAWYER.

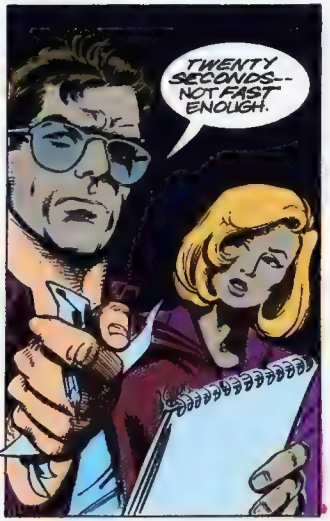
MEANING "YES."
BRINNNG
EXCUSE ME, THAT MAY BE FOR ME.


I'M AT HARKER'S PLACE, LOOT. NOBODY'S SEEN HIM SINCE LAST NIGHT.


HOW'S THE PLACE LOOK, GIMONS? ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS?

AFRAID SO, LIEUTENANT...


LET'S GO, WEBB. THIS IS GETTING WORSE BY THE MINUTE.
GABE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THE JONES ARE THE MEN THAT WILL NOT BE BLAMED


TWENTY SECONDS-- NOT FAST ENOUGH.

Get a new perspective on life!
Trollords
#4
ON SALE IN MAY!
SCOTT B.
PAUL F.
Comico The Comic Company

Ribit!
BY FRANK THORNE™

SHE'S ONE SERIOUS BABE!

Photo by Dennis Harrold

RIBIT! TM and © 1989 Frank Thorne

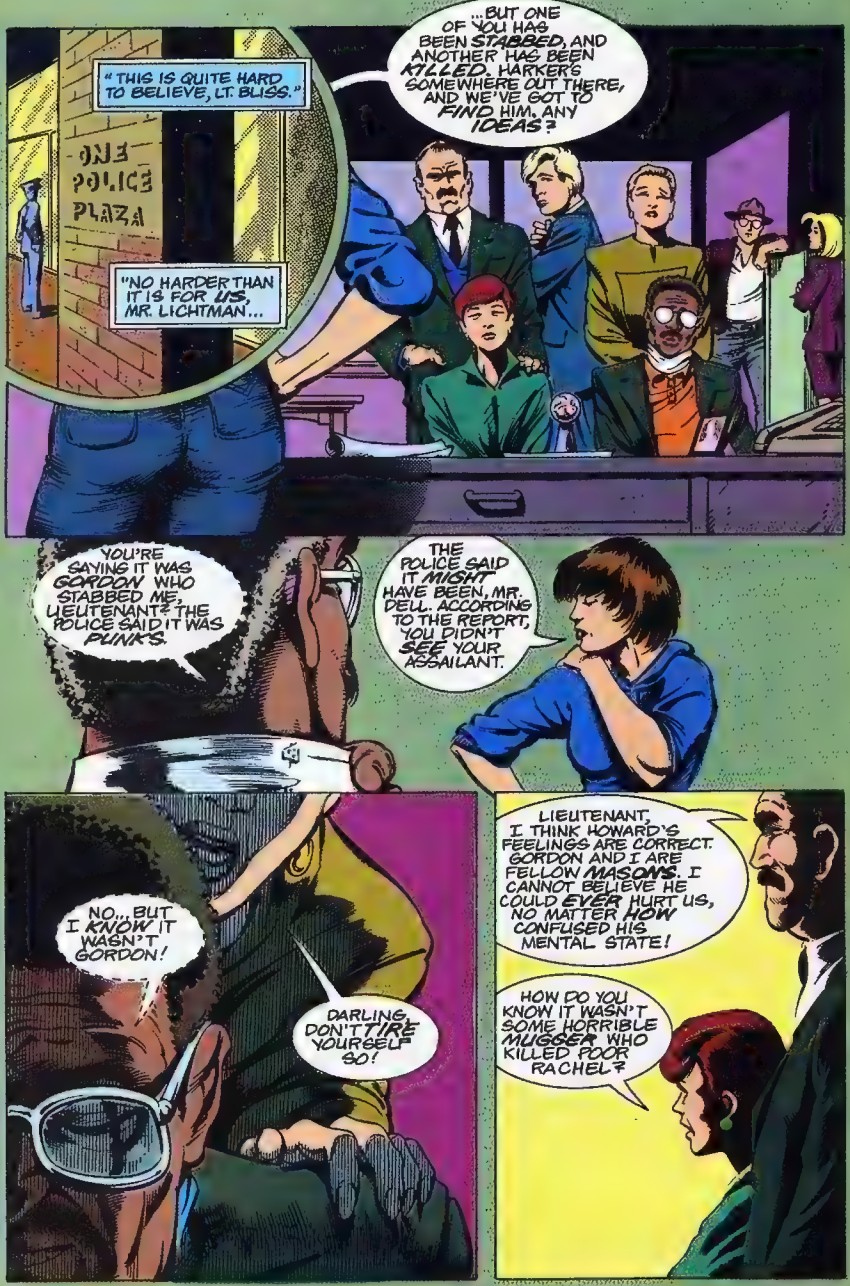
Boy meets girl — boy loses girl at Woodstock in downtown Hades, featuring Hitler playing the banjo! It's a bum-rush ballad of blazing uzis, blasting VCRs, barreling ATVs, and skidding skateboards. Follow the hip-hop hurdling after the orb of green crystal as the chrome-clad warlord commands his demon hordes to destroy Ribit and all the practitioners of obsolete magic!

Featuring the fabulous Linda Berhle as the omniscient Sargasso!

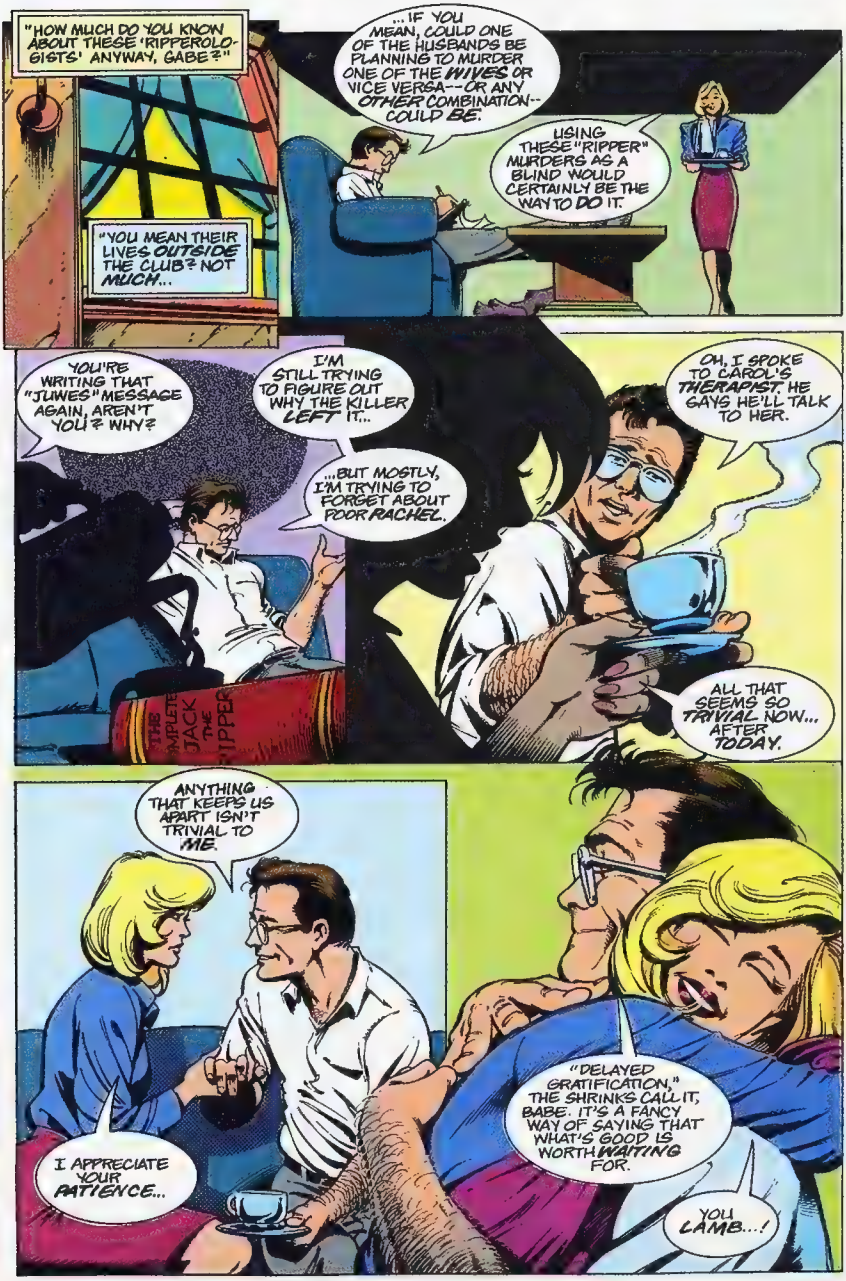
An all-new, full-color mini-series written and illustrated by Frank Thorne, Red Sonja artist and creator of Ghita and Moonshine McJuggs!

Be here for the chillin' conclusion to this totally hot series!

$1.95 on sale from Comics The Comic Company


"THIS IS QUITE HARD TO BELIEVE, LT. BLISS."
ONE POLICE PLAZA
"NO HARDER THAN IT IS FOR US, MR. LICHTMAN...
...BUT ONE OF YOU HAS BEEN STABBED, AND ANOTHER HAS BEEN KILLED. HARKER'S SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, AND WE'VE GOT TO FIND HIM. ANY IDEAS?
YOU'RE SAYING IT WAS GORDON WHO STABBED ME, LIEUTENANT? THE POLICE SAID IT WAS PUNKS.
THE POLICE SAID IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN, MR. DELL. ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, YOU DIDN'T SEE YOUR ASSAILANT.
NO... BUT I KNOW IT WASN'T GORDON!
DARLING, DON'T TIRE YOURSELF SO!
LIEUTENANT, I THINK HOWARD'S FEELINGS ARE CORRECT. GORDON AND I ARE FELLOW MASONS. I CANNOT BELIEVE HE COULD EVER HURT US, NO MATTER HOW CONFUSED HIS MENTAL STATE!
HOW DO YOU KNOW IT WASN'T SOME HORRIBLE MUGGER WHO KILLED POOR RACHEL?

BECAUSE MS. SILVERMAN KNEW HER KILLER--SHE LET HIM IN HERSELF. THE KILLER WAS SOMEONE SHE TRUSTED..
...AND THAT "JUWES" MESSAGE WAS THE ACT OF A "RIPPEROLOGIST" WITH A DERANGED MIND--WHY ELSE TAKE THE TIME TO LEAVE IT WHEN WEBB WAS ON THE WAY UP? THAT ALL POINTS TO HARKER.
HARDLY AN AIRTIGHT CASE, LIEUTENANT.
RIGHT NOW, I'M CONCERNED WITH KEEPING YOU ALIVE, MR. LICHTMAN. WE CAN'T ASSIGN GUARDS TO EACH OF YOU, BUT I'M SENDING PATROL CARS BY YOUR HOUSES ON A REGULAR SWEEP.
I HOPE IT'S ENOUGH.
HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU, LIEUTENANT, THAT THE KILLER MAY BE ONE OF THEM?
OF COURSE IT'S OCCURRED TO ME, MISS MAYS...
...BUT IF IT IS--AND UNTIL WE CAN FIGURE OUT SOME SORT OF PATTERN TO THIS--I'D RATHER HAVE THEM THINK I'M A DUMB COP WHO'LL TAKE THE LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE.

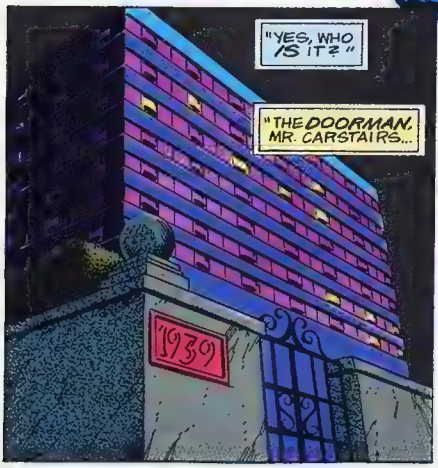

"HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THESE 'RIPPEROLOGISTS' ANYWAY, GABE?"
"YOU MEAN THEIR LIVES OUTSIDE THE CLUB? NOT MUCH...
...IF YOU MEAN, COULD ONE OF THE HUSBANDS BE PLANNING TO MURDER ONE OF THE WIVES OR VICE VERSA--OR ANY OTHER COMBINATION--COULD BE.
USING THESE "RIPPER" MURDERS AS A BLIND WOULD CERTAINLY BE THE WAY TO DO IT.
YOU'RE WRITING THAT "JUWES" MESSAGE AGAIN, AREN'T YOU? WHY?
I'M STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHY THE KILLER LEFT IT...
...BUT MOSTLY, I'M TRYING TO FORGET ABOUT POOR RACHEL.
THE COMPLETE JACK THE RIPPER
OH, I SPOKE TO CAROL'S THERAPIST. HE SAYS HE'LL TALK TO HER.
ALL THAT SEEMS SO TRIVIAL NOW... AFTER TODAY.
ANYTHING THAT KEEPS US APART ISN'T TRIVIAL TO ME.
I APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE...
"DELAYED GRATIFICATION," THE SHRINKS CALL IT, BABE. IT'S A FANCY WAY OF SAYING THAT WHAT'S GOOD IS WORTH WAITING FOR.
YOU LAMB...!

DING DONNG
WHO'S THERE...?

SERGEANT SIMONS, MISS MAYS. THE LOOT WANTED ME TO LOOK IN ON YOU AND THE PROFESSOR. EVERYTHING OKAY?
FINE, SERGEANT, THANK YOU. MR. WEBB WILL BE STAYING HERE TONIGHT.

"HERE"?
IN THE GUEST ROOM, ACE. UNTIL THIS "RIPPER" IS CAUGHT, I DON'T WANT TO TAKE ANY CHANCES.

THIS IS JUST LIKE SUMMER CAMP: BOYS IN ONE TENT, GIRLS IN ANOTHER.
REMEMBER, THE MANAGEMENT TAKES A VERY DIM VIEW OF CAMP-FIRES.


"YES, WHO IS IT?"
"THE DOORMAN, MR. CARSTAIRS...
1939

...I FOUND THIS ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO YOU AT MY STATION WHEN I GOT BACK FROM MY BREAK.
THANK YOU, PERKINS.

"CHARLES...?
JACK THE RIPPER
THE FINAL SOLUTION
OH, HERE YOU ARE. WELL, I'M FOR BED. YOU COULD USE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP TOO, AFTER TONIGHT.
YES... I'LL JOIN YOU SOON, WILMA.
SUBWAY

MY WORD, WHAT ARE YOU DOING --?
GIVE BLOOD APRIL 3-10
6
SCREEEEECH
"I'M SORRY, MRS. CARSTAIRS, BUT I HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LOOK AT HIM TO MAKE AN IDENTIFICATION..."
"I ›SOB‹ UNDERSTAND, LIEUTENANT..."
...YES... THAT'S CHARLES...! ›SOB‹
WE CAME AS SOON AS WE HEARD, LIEUTENANT.

COMICO **BLIMP**

Welcome, readers. This month, we're anticipating that quite a few of you may be new to the fold. The reason? We've been taken under the strong distribution wing of DC Comics, the venerable publisher of the world's first super-hero, Superman. While DC and Comico remain two separate companies, each with its own individual editorial policies, our books are now being printed together, shipped out to distributors' warehouses together, and, perhaps most important from Comico's point of view, *ordered* together.

Now, don't think I'm gonna bore you with a lesson in marketing. Let's talk about what this new relationship means to *you*, the reader:

First of all, it means a better quality product. Thanks to the shared printing program, Comico's books are now being printed at Ronalds Printing in Montreal, Canada. Ronalds is generally considered to be the *best* printer on the block, for comics or anything else. (Bet you didn't know that Ronalds prints one of the best-selling magazines in all of North America — *Time* magazine — did you?) Readers who have been with us for the last couple of years should have already noticed the difference since January: better quality paper, truer color, crisper blacks, and a more solid comic all around.

(In fact, since we switched over to Ronalds a little sooner than originally planned, our *December* books were printed on an even *better* paper stock than usual, so you wound up with a *lot* more for your money that month!)

That Comico's publications are now being listed on DC's order form is a tremendous advantage for us, as it means that more retailers than ever before will be made aware of all our great, funky books. In fact, this month's titles are the first to have been sold via the new system. But how does that impact on you? Well, it means that retailers who have never before carried Comico's line of quality product can now make it readily available to you. So, if you've had a hard time finding Comico's comics in the past, this should make your monthly reading needs easier to satisfy; and if you're right now reading a Comico comic for the very first time, you can thank the good offices of DC Comics for making that possible.

••••••••••

This month also marks a couple other new beginnings, and I want to point them out to new and old readers alike. The first of these is the *Elementals* renaissance. That's right — everybody's favorite super-team is back on the stands once again, with a brand-new first issue, written by creator **Bill Willingham** and drawn by the new regular art team of **Mike Leeke** and **Mike Chen.** And for those one or two of you who don't know, the Elementals aren't your typical heroes: for one thing, they're all *dead!* See what I mean when *Elementals* #1 debuts, the last week of March.

And for those whose taste runs to something a little more offbeat, be sure to check out *The Amazon*, also premiering this month. Written by **Steve Seagle** and lushly illustrated by **Tim Sale,** this three-issue ecoseries examines the ravaging of the Amazon Basin and tales of its spiritual avenger, all through the eyes of an American journalist who may or may not be an objective reporter.

••••••••••

Finally, a quick reminder: Comics is the one entertainment medium that offers you, the reader, the opportunity for direct input. If you've got something to say, you can be sure we'll listen. Write to:

Comico The Comic Company
1547 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401

••••••••••

See you in thirty.

Diana Schutz
Editor in Chief

STAFF

Bob Schreck
Administrative Director

Diana Schutz
Editor in Chief

Rick Taylor
Art Director

Gerry Giovinco
Dennis LaSorda
Phil LaSorda
Publishers

MARCH **HYPE**

SHIPPING MARCH 7th, 1989

GRENDEL #29
JUSTICE MACHINE #27

SHIPPING MARCH 14th, 1989

TROLLORDS #3
THE MAZE AGENCY #4

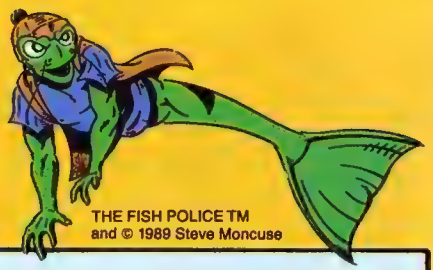
SHIPPING MARCH 21st, 1989

THE AMAZON #1
THE TROUBLE WITH GIRLS #2

SHIPPING MARCH 28th, 1989

ELEMENTALS #1
RIBIT! #3

APRIL **HYPE**



THE FISH POLICE TM
and © 1989 Steve Moncuse

SHIPPING APRIL 4th, 1989

COMICO ATTRACTIONS #18
If you're fool enough to miss this edition of our bimonthly propaganda rag, then may you rot in a dark and musty cell for a thousand years! Miss this, and you miss your first look at a really hot book that Comico is gearing up for the summer of '89: **Plastic Forks,** served up by comics' cutting edge, **Ted** *(Eddy Current)* **McKeever!** Plus: lots of other neat stuff that you're just dying to know about!

Per 100 $7.00 U.S. $8.95 CAN.

GRENDEL #30
Comics don't get any better than this, as **Matt Wagner's** nightmarish tale of the future gives us the first direct confrontation between God and the Devil! Meanwhile, Pellon Cross and Pope Innocent XLII have a squabble of their own, which leaves the "Devil Unveiled"! This issue is written by **Matt Wagner,** pencilled by **John K. Snyder,** inked by guest artist **Bernie Mireault,** and features hand-painted color by **Joe Matt.** *Contains adult themes and harsh language. Parental Guidance Suggested.*

32 pgs. $1.95 U.S. $2.50 CAN.

JUSTICE MACHINE #28
While the Machine team is still away at the circus, the Free Force is left alone to protect the island techno-city, New Atlantis. They've already got their hands full with Nebo, a wisecracking, mechanical genius, when the bloodthirsty cannibal, Killgore, shows up for dinner! It's an action-packed slugfest that's not recommended for the squeamish! Created, plotted, and illustrated by **Mike Gustovich,** scripted by **Len Wein,** and colored by **Ken Feduniewicz.**

32 pgs. $1.95 U.S. $2.50 CAN.

SHIPPING APRIL 11th, 1989

THE FISH POLICE #16
Out at the Rural Reefs, Oscar discovers the Word according to Fish — he and Rey put their fish heads together to solve parts of the puzzle that is Gill. Meanwhile, the intrepid inspector sets out to murder the nefarious Hook, just as Goldie and Bass are about to spring a trap on S.Q.U.I.D.'s evil leader. Story and art by **Steve Moncuse,** with colors by **Matt Webb.** Plus: a **Fish Shticks** back-up written by Moncuse and illustrated by **Matt** *(Post Bros./Keif Llama)* **Howarth.**

32 pgs. $1.95 U.S. $2.50 CAN.

THE MAZE AGENCY #5
Cryogenics divides the family of a man whose attempted resurrection is tearing them apart! Is it an act of love, or inconceivable blasphemy?! Strong convictions lead to rather rash results and yet another murder case for the MAZE Agency. Meanwhile, Jennifer's personal life is no great shakes, either — could Jen be seeing green where Gabe's concerned? "Death Warmed Over" is written by **Mike W. Barr,** pencilled by **Adam Hughes,** inked by guest artist **Al** *(Checkmate)* **Vey,** with colors by **Julia Lacquement.**

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SHIPPING APRIL 18th, 1989

THE AMAZON #2
Point Magazine reporter Malcolm C. Hilliard hires a translator in order to make contact with the Jatapu tribe and shed some light on the mysterious disappearance of an American worker and the sabotaging of an American-owned timber-mining company. After a revealing interview with the Jatapu chieftain, Malcolm is left drugged and alone in the wilderness, where he thinks he may have seen something . . . or someone! The second issue of this three-issue mini-series is created and written by **Steve Seagle** (creator of the Eisner Award-nominated *Kafka)* and illustrated by **Tim** *(Thieves' World/ Grendel)* **Sale,** who also provides a beautiful cover painting.

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THE TROUBLE WITH GIRLS #3
When Lily Lee shows up on Lester's doorstep as an unexpected houseguest, they both find unexpected romance! Then, it's off to Spain to reclaim Lily's lost fortune (so she says!), where Girls encounters some unexpected shady characters and winds up unexpectedly playing matador. The unexpected ending is the best part of this all-new satirical series, which is created and written by **Will Jacobs** and **Gerard Jones,** pencilled by **Tim Hamilton,** and unexpectedly inked by **Chuck Austen,** with colors by **Matt Webb.** *Contains mature themes and some nudity. Parental guidance is suggested.*

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SHIPPING APRIL 25th, 1989

ELEMENTALS #2
Transported to another dimension, Vortex single-handedly takes on a horde of fire-breathing flying hellhounds, as the remaining Elementals take the "Downtown Slugway" — which drops them off at a battle station filled with demons! All courtesy of Ambrose, kid-wizard, who winds up having a showdown of his own! Back on Earth, the Reverend Jeremy Skagg sees "the Light" and the mysterious Rapture gets even more mysterious. "Good-bye Yellow Brick Road" is created and written by **Bill Willingham,** pencilled by **Mike Leeke,** inked by **Mike Chen,** and colored by **Janet Jackson.** Cover by **Bill Willingham.**

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RIBIT! #4
Imprisoned on the isle of Tabori, Ribit and Thog are helpless in the fight against the fall of Zebulon, as the queen of the alien Dargs conjures a spell that transforms all humans into reptilian drones. Will Boomer Fan, Sargasso, and Sahtee be able to assist Ribit in securing the powerful crystal orb from the Darg queen — or is all hope lost? The final and climactic issue of this four-issue mini-series is created, written, and beautifully illustrated by **Frank Thorne.**

32 pgs. $1.95 U.S. $2.50 CAN.

WAS THERE A MESSAGE? ANOTHER QUOTE FROM THE RIPPER CASE?
NO--MAYBE HE DIDN'T WANT TO RISK BEING SEEN BY ANYONE IN THE APPROACHING TRAIN.
HE USED THE SAME LEFT-TO-RIGHT SWEEP, I SEE...
BUT WE FOUND THIS LETTER ON HIS PERSON. NO POSTMARK ON THE ENVELOPE, BUT SIMONS SAYS IT MATCHES HARKER'S WRITING.
CHARLES: YOU MUST SEE ME! I WILL WAIT
LT. BLISS, DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG IT WILL BE BEFORE...}SNIF{ ...BEFORE HIS BODY IS RELEASED FOR BURIAL?
I'VE NO IDEA, MRS. CARSTAIRS. DR. POST WILL HAVE TO PERFORM AN AUTOPSY, OF COURSE.
HE DOESN'T LEAVE A MESSAGE, BECAUSE SOMEONE ON THE TRAIN MIGHT SEE HIM...YET HE TAKES THE TIME TO LEAVE A MESSAGE WHEN HE KNOWS I'M ON THE WAY UP...?
I SEE. }SNIF{ I'LL WANT TO SHIP HIS BODY BACK TO ENGLAND, OF COURSE, AS CALLED FOR IN HIS WILL...
WHAT?

CAPTAIN CARSTAIRS WAS BRITISH?
WHY, YES. ?SNIF? WE HAD LIVED HERE FOR YEARS, BUT HE NEVER LOST HIS LOVE FOR HOME...
LIEUTENANT, I KNOW WHO THIS "RIPPER'S" NEXT VICTIM WILL BE!
I'M GLAD YOUR BRAIN'S WORKING...!
I'VE BEEN WONDERING IF THERE WAS SOME PATTERN TO THE VICTIMS... THEN I REMEMBERED READING OF A RHYME MAILED TO THE LONDON POLICE IN 1888 BY SOMEONE CLAIMING TO BE JACK THE RIPPER...
...IT'S BECOME QUITE INFAMOUS. IT BEGINS: "I'm not a butcher, I'm not a Yid, Nor yet a foreign skipper--"
HOLY GOD--!
WANTED
POLICE SKETCH
THE REDROCK SLASHER
MR. DELL OWNS A CHAIN OF GROCERY STORES, WHICH ALSO SELL MEAT; "A BUTCHER." MS. SILVERMAN WAS JEWISH, A DEROGATORY TERM FOR WHICH IS "A YID." CAPTAIN CARSTAIRS, BEING ENGLISH, WAS "A FOREIGN SKIPPER"?

WELL, HOW DOES IT END? WHO'S THE NEXT VICTIM?
"...But I'm your own light-hearted friend, Yours truly, Jack the Ripper."
AND THAT MEANS THE NEXT VICTIM IS "LIGHT-HEARTED"? THAT COULD BE ANYONE!
"YOU THINK I'M THE NEXT VICTIM? WHY ME?"
NO, I KNOW WHO IT MEANS...!
BECAUSE THE FIRST SYLLABLE OF YOUR LAST NAME IS A SCOTTISH VARIATION OF THE WORD "LIGHT"!
I'LL BET HE'S A WHIZ AT CROSSWORD PUZZLES!
"THAT'S MAD--!"
YES-- BUT THIS KILLER IS EITHER A MADMAN OR WANTS US TO THINK HE IS, MR. LICHTMAN!
THEN... I'M NEXT?

"...BUT I DON'T THINK THERE'LL BE ANY REAL ACTION UNTIL TONIGHT."
DON'T WORRY. TWO OUT OF THREE OF HIS MURDER ATTEMPTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE AT NIGHT. I'LL ASSIGN PLAINCLOTHES GUARDS TO YOU TODAY...
THERE'S NO WAY ANYONE CAN GET INTO THAT BUILDING WITHOUT US KNOWING, MISS MAYS! EVEN THE DOORMAN IS A PLAINCLOTHES COP!
PERHAPS... BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL WE'VE OVERLOOKED SOMETHING, LIEUTENANT.
EVERYONE'S READY, LOOT-- EVERYONE BUT THE PROFESSOR!
HE MUST HAVE HAD A REASON FOR LEAVING THE "JUWES" MESSAGE-- WHY?
LOOKS T'BE A COOL NIGHT-- WISH I'D THOUGHT T'BRING A PAIR OF GLOVES.
"GLOVES"?
THAT'S IT...! THAT'S WHY THE KILLER LEFT THE "JUWES" MESSAGE...!
LOOKS LIKE THE PROFESSOR'S ON TO SOMETHING, LOOT!

LATER, SIMONS!
THERE'S SOMEONE ON THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING NEXT DOOR...!
"...HE'S THROWING SOMETHING...!"
WHOOOMF
WHAT'S HAPPENING UP THERE, DOMBROWSKI?
IT LOOKS WORSE THAN IT IS, LIEUTENANT! I THINK IT'LL BURN ITSELF OUT! I'M OKAY!
STAY LOW, DOMBROWSKI! I'LL SEND SOME MEN UP! MAKE SURE YOU KNOW ALL OF THEM!
GOD-- I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE KILLER WOULD HAVE MADE A PERSONAL ATTEMPT TO KILL LICHTMAN-- OR HIS STAND-IN...
...THIS ISN'T LIKE THE RIPPER AT ALL...
YOU TAKE THIS TOO LIGHTLY, MR. WEBB.
MY GOD--!
LIEUTENANT, GIVE ME THAT!

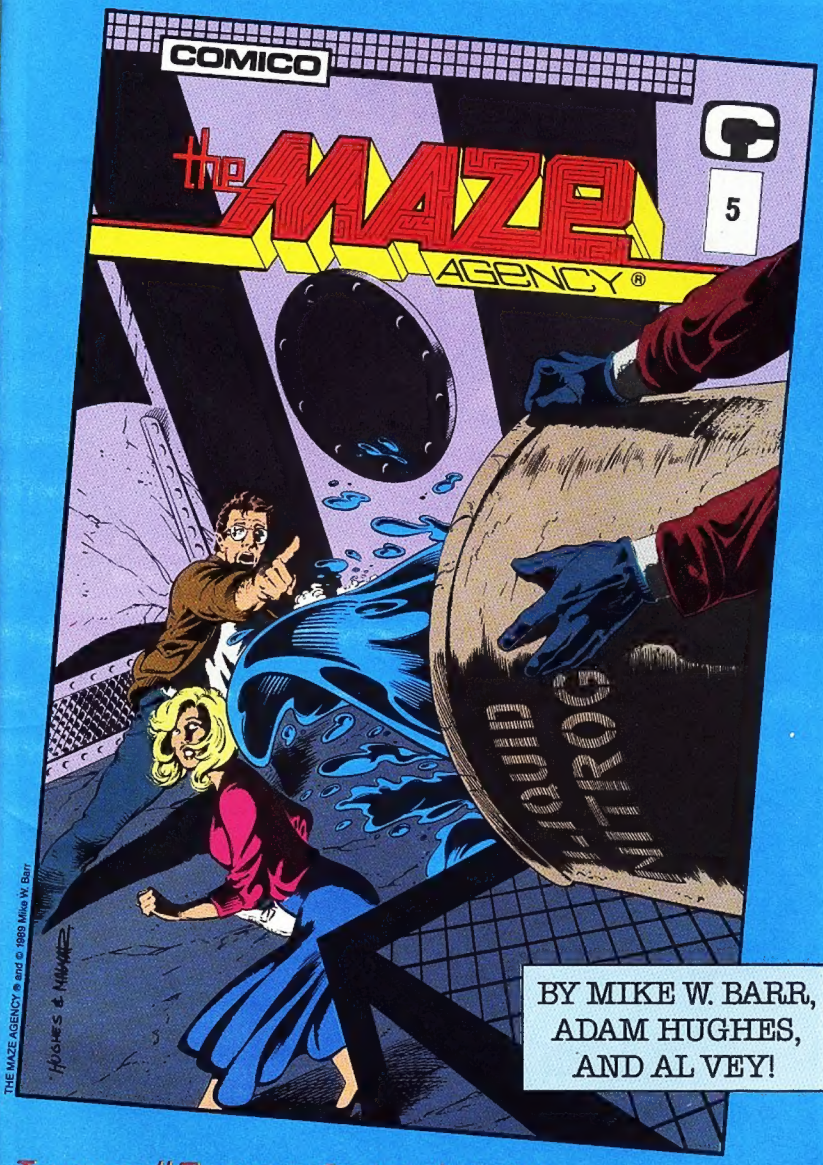
SGT. SIMONS-- LOOK OUT! THE PENTHOUSE ATTACK WAS A DIVERSION! IT'S GABE THE KILLER'S AFTER!
HUH?
AGGGGH!
GET AWAY FROM ME... I KNOW WHO YOU ARE...!
FREEZE!
BANG BANG
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, ACE?
FINE-- THANKS TO THE MAYS AND BLISS CAVALRY!
WE PROBABLY LOST HIM, WITH ALL OUR MEN AT THE PENTHOUSE! MAYBE THERE ARE SOME PRINTS ON THIS SCALPEL!
IT DOESN'T MATTER, LIEUTENANT...

...I KNOW WHO THE KILLER IS! AND I'M PRETTY SURE WHERE HE'S GOING!
THEN LET'S GET THERE!
"KEEP THE SIRENS OFF. I DON'T WANT TO ALERT ANYONE! YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY, SIMONS?"
"I'LL LIVE."
YOUR SCHEME HAS FAILED, GORDON. AND YOUR POOR, DELUDED MIND SEES SUICIDE AS THE ONLY WAY OUT...
mrrf! mrrrf!
BANG SPWEEE
DROP IT!
DROP IT!
KLUNKT
GOOD CALL, MRS. CARSTAIRS!
KLIK

"IT WAS WILMA? THAT'S SO HARD TO BELIEVE..."
"IT MIGHT SEEM MORE CREDIBLE, HOWARD...
...IF SHE HAD HELD YOU PRISONER, BOUND AND DRUGGED, IN THE VACANT APARTMENT OF HER BUILDING. I NEVER LIKED THAT WOMAN!
THEN IT WAS WILMA WHO TRIED TO KILL ME?
NO, THAT PROBABLY WAS THE WORK OF PUNKS, MR. DELL. REMEMBER, THE DOCTOR SAID YOUR THROAT WAS CUT FROM RIGHT TO LEFT, WHILE MRS. CARSTAIRS USED THE RIPPER'S METHOD OF LEFT TO RIGHT.
THE ATTACK ON YOU--COINCIDENTALLY, A KIND OF "BUTCHER"!-- SPARKED HER PLAN, AND SHE CONTINUED THE PATTERN...
...THE GOAL OF WHICH WAS TO OBTAIN HER HUSBAND'S WEALTH IN ITS ENTIRETY-- SOMETHING SHE COULD DO ONLY BY INHERITANCE!
DR. HARKER, YOUR-- UH-- PROTEST AT THE MEETING LED HER TO MAKE YOU THE SCAPEGOAT...
...BY CALLING ME TO HER APARTMENT, SAYING POOR CHARLES WAS ILL. THEN THE VIXEN DRUGGED ME-- KEPT ME THERE! SHE SAID IF I DIDN'T WRITE THAT NOTE TO CHARLES, SHE'D KILL ME!
POOR CHARLES... BUT TELL ME, WEBB, HOW DID YOU KNOW?
I WONDERED WHY THE KILLER TOOK TIME TO LEAVE THAT "JUWES" MESSAGE WITH ME ON THE WAY UP! RACHEL LIVED FOR NO LONGER THAN TEN SECONDS...
...AND IT TAKES A MINIMUM OF TWENTY SECONDS TO PRINT IT! SO SHE DIDN'T WRITE IT! THEN SGT. SIMONS MENTIONED GLOVES...

BE BLAMED FOR NOTHING
"AND I REALIZED THAT THOUGH RAE HAD BEEN WORKING--HER SWEATSHIRT AND THE WALL BY HER INTERCOM WERE SMUDGED--HER HANDS WERE CLEAN!
"THE KILLER HAD REMOVED THE PROTECTIVE GLOVES RAE HAD BEEN WEARING. WHY? TO CONCEAL THAT RAE HAD BEEN WRITING SOMETHING!
"WHILE THE KILLER WIPED OUT ALL HER OWN PRINTS, RAE TRIED, WITH HER DYING STRENGTH, TO WRITE THE KILLER'S NAME ON THE WALL! THE KILLER COULDN'T ERASE GREASE PENCIL...
"...SO SHE TRIED TO CONCEAL IT BY ADDING TO IT! SHE REMOVED RAE'S GLOVES, TAKING THEM WITH HER, THEN WROTE THE 'JUWES' MESSAGE.
"IT WAS RISKY, WITH ME ON THE WAY UP, BUT IT HAD TO BE DONE.
I EXAMINED THE MESSAGE, TO SEE WHICH NAMES OF THE SUSPECTS IT MIGHT CONTAIN... THERE WAS ONLY ONE THAT FIT.
WILL NOT
WIL (WILMA)
TELL ME, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO LONDON?
IS THAT AN INVITATION?
NOT YET...
"...BUT THE CHILDREN OF LONDON CHANT A RHYME WHEN THEY SKIP ROPE... IT SEEMS APROPOS..."
JACK THE RIPPER'S DEAD, AND LYING ON HIS BED. HE CUT THIS THROAT WITH SUNLIGHT SOAP. JACK THE RIPPER'S DEAD.
THE END

Criminal Cryogenics!



BY MIKE W. BARR, ADAM HUGHES, AND AL VEY!

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Issue #5 on sale in April!
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the AMAZON™

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from the desk of
Jennifer Mays

MAZE AGENTS

1547 DeKalb St., Norristown, Pa 19401

Dear Michael Eury,

I am unabashedly the world's most ardent Mike W. Barr fan. **[Hey, *this* is the way to start a lettercol! — MWB]** From his exploits with *The Outsiders*, his terrific *Star Trek* stories, and his superb *Batman* chronicles, I have loved every wonderful page of script this talent has ever brought forth. (I didn't forget *Camelot 3000* — I just couldn't find the right words to do it justice.) **[Look, I don't write these letters, I just print 'em. — MWB]** Thus, when I learned he was coming to Comico to do a whodunit-type book, I was delighted.

I've just finished *The MAZE Agency* #1, "The Adventure of the Rogue's Gallery," and am happy to report the book fulfilled all my expectations. This one is going to be a big winner in so many ways. The main characters are wonderful, and Adam Hughes is surely one of the finest new artists to appear on the comics scene in years. **[And let's not forget the absolutely swell inking of Rick Magyar, okay? — MWB]** His rendition of Jennifer is sensational! Gabriel is one lucky dog, ha.

Okay, I really don't want to bore you with idle, albeit lavish praise. **[Hey, I've got no appointments this evening. — MWB]** Rest assured, I will be spreading the word that *The MAZE Agency* is a special kind of book no fan wants to miss. Thanks, Comico, for having the courage to go with it.

Ron Fortier
Somersworth, NH

— Good point, Ron! If you like *MAZE*, tell your fellow comics fans! And if you don't like it . . . well, what are you doing here? — MWB

[Editor's Note: Ron Fortier is the writer of Ocean Comics' *Popeye Special*, Blackthorne's *Rambo*, and Now Comics' *The Terminator*. — ME]

Dear Mike,

I'm a big fan of yours and have enjoyed your previous work at DC, especially your run on *Detective Comics* and the Batman graphic novel, *Son of the Demon*, so I was really looking forward to reading *The MAZE Agency*. You see, I'm also a fan of detective stories and have stayed up many hours reading them, be they Ellery Queen, Rex Stout, Mickey Spillane, or Arthur Conan Doyle's tales.

Well, I read *MAZE* #1 and it was every bit as good as I'd expected it to be. Your story was terrific, and the Adam Hughes/Rick Magyar art team was excellent — very reminiscent of the team of Alan Davis and Paul Neary, but slightly more on the real-life side. I am looking forward to future issues to read and cases to solve.

By the way, I knew who the murderer was.

Matthew D. Spatola
Mount Joy, PA

— But you didn't get to go home with Jennifer.

Adam and Rick are avid Davis/Neary fans, too, but you'll be seeing them stake out their own artistic style more and more with each issue. I think *this* issue was a real breakthrough in that respect. — MWB

Dear Diana & Mike,

Congratulations on *The MAZE Agency* #1. Being a fan of detective stories, as well as an aspiring writer of said genre, I must admit I had my reservations about this series, since it would appear to be comics' answer to *Moonlighting*, which isn't one of my favorite shows. Thankfully, this isn't the case.

MAZE carves its own niche, entertaining the reader while challenging the reader to solve the mystery before Jen and Gabe do. I must confess that I didn't try to solve the case myself; I save that brain-straining task for TV shows like *Matlock*. Mike's script was very good, and the artwork of Adam Hughes and Rick Magyar, while an adequate substitute for the original artist, Alan Davis, carves its own niche. **[See? — MWB]** I'm impressed. Keep up the good work.

Any chance of two-or-more-part stories in the future? I'd like to see more cliffhangers to really challenge me (and everyone else). Otherwise, you have another hit on your hands.

See you in thirty. Aloha.

Jacob Gilbert
Troy, NY

— Book 'em Dano — Murder One! Ha!

As you doubtless know, Jacob, the idea of a male-female detective team is a long tradition in both prose and TV. On the tube alone we have *Remington Steele, Hart To Hart, McMillan & Wife, Mr. & Mrs. North*, and *The Thin Man*. The latter two shows came from prose, of course, and there are lots of others. *MAZE* can't be the first, so we're trying to make it the best.

How do the rest of you readers feel about multi-part stories? The first few issues or so of *MAZE* will be one-parters, but there's always tomorrow . . . — MWB

BACKSTORY

All of the historical info in this issue about the Jack the Ripper murders is factual. However, it's the *interpretation* of those facts that has caused crime buffs to ponder the true motives and identity of Jack the Ripper a full century after his grisly spree. Readers wishing to learn more will find lots to ponder in *The Complete Jack the Ripper* by Donald Rumbellow, *Jack the Ripper: 100 Years of Mystery* by Peter Underwood, and *Jack the Ripper: 100 Years of Investigation* by Terence Sharkey. My favorites are *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution* by Stephen Knight and his companion volume, *The Brotherhood: The Secret World of the Freemasons*. Weird stuff. Also highly recommended is the 1979 movie, *Murder By Decree*, featuring Christopher Plummer and James Mason as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson on the trail of Saucy Jack, using much material from the actual investigation. Also good, though nowhere near as factual, is 1965's *A Study In Terror*, with John Neville and Donald Houston as Holmes and Watson. This was also adapted into an Ellery Queen novel of the same title, in which EQ also solves the Ripper murders! God, I love this stuff!

— Mike W. Barr

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